

**While at Natural Tunnel...**

Drop by the visitor center and see exhibits on the geological, railroad and cultural history of the park. Also be sure and visit the gift shop located in the entrance of the visitor center.

The region surrounding Natural Tunnel State Park offers many interesting attractions such as the Southwest Virginia Museum, the John Fox Museum, the June Tolliver House and Harry Meador Coal Museum, and Virginia's State Outdoor Drama “The Trail of the Lonesome Pine.” All of these attractions are 20 minutes from the park in Big Stone Gap. Retrace the footsteps of Daniel Boone as he forged the wilderness road through the area at Wilderness Road State Park and Cumberland Gap National Historic Park, both in adjoining Lee County.

Duffield, five miles north, Gate City, 13 miles south, and Kingsport, Tennessee, 20 miles south of the park, offer such services as grocery and beverage supplies and fishing licenses, entertainment, lodging and worship services.

In case of an emergency, notify a park ranger or dial 911. Hospitals are in Big Stone Gap and Kingsport, with ambulance service from Duffield.

**Campground rules**

- Camping is allowed only in designated campgrounds and only after following the proper check-in procedure.
- Registration for a state park campsite must be completed by a member of the camping party 18 years of age or older. This person accepts responsibility for the remainder of the camping party.
- Campsites are designed to be used by a maximum of six people or one family.
- Pets are permitted in all state parks, They must be kept at all times in an enclosed area or on a leash no longer than six feet. No pets are permitted in bathing areas or toilet facilities. Pet fees apply for pets kept in overnight facilities.

- One motor vehicle, in addition to the camping unit, is permitted per site. Only the camping unit listed on the campsite application is permitted. Additional vehicles will be charged a daily parking fee.
- State park campgrounds are intended for the traveling public and not for extended or seasonal camping. The maximum camping stay per park is 14 days in any 30-day period.
- Check-in is 4 p.m. Check-out is 3 p.m.
- Campgrounds have posted campground quiet hours. Campers are expected to adhere to these posted hours.
- Fires must be confined to campgrills, campstoves or designated firerings.
- Laundry sinks are to be used only for washing clothes.
- Campers, at the time of registration, must inform the park staff of the names of visitors expected to arrive at the campsite. Visitors will not be admitted to camping area unless so identified. Visitors are permitted only between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m.
- The public use or display of alcoholic beverages is prohibited. Public intoxication and/or disorderly conduct will not be tolerated.

**Join us in the parks –  
DCR's volunteer programs**

DCR offers diverse opportunities for volunteers in most state parks and natural areas throughout the state. Inquire at the park office for details.

**Frequent visitors save money**

Annual passes for parking and swimming offer the frequent visitor great savings. Stop by the park office for details.

**Virginia State Parks Reservation Center**

To receive more information on Virginia State Parks or to make a picnic shelter or campsite reservation, call 1-800-933-PARK.

**For more information, contact:**

Natural Tunnel State Park  
Route 3, Box 250  
Duffield, Virginia 24244  
(276) 940-2674

You can also visit our website at:  
**[www.dcr.state.va.us](http://www.dcr.state.va.us)**



Department of Conservation & Recreation  
CONSERVING VIRGINIA'S NATURAL & RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

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VIRGINIA

STATE PARKS

Natural Tunnel  
State Park  
Guide

Duffield, Virginia

Virginia State Parks provide  
**A Natural Legacy**  
of outdoor activities and  
programs. They are an important  
part of DCR's efforts to promote  
a strong conservation ethic.  
These efforts ensure that the  
best of Virginia's natural  
resources will be protected and  
available for future generations.

**Natural Tunnel, A Natural Wonder**  
Since the 1880s, about the time famous statesman William Jennings Bryan declared it the “Eighth Wonder of the World,” Natural Tunnel has attracted sightseers from all parts of the country. It is said Daniel Boone was among the first explorers to see the tunnel, and it was an area well known to the local Indians and hunters prior to that. However, the tunnel got its start long before man was on the scene.

Natural Tunnel is believed to be about one million years old and started forming during the early part of the Pleistocene Epoch. The cave was initially formed at or near the water table by ground water bearing carbonic acid that percolated through cracks and crevices and slowly dissolved the surrounding limestone and dolomitic bedrock. After the cave was formed and the regional water table lowered, Stock Creek, which flows south to join the Clinch River, was probably diverted underground. It has since used the tunnel as a path of least resistance through the end of Purchase Ridge. The tunnel has been further enlarged over the years by the erosive action of this stream.

The amphitheater is a deep semicircular basin excavated in limestone that marks the beginning of Stock Creek Gorge. The walls of this huge limestone basin are nearly vertical, rising to heights of more than 400 feet.

Access to Natural Tunnel is available via the park’s chairlift or tunnel trail, which begins at the visitor center. A tunnel observation platform is at the mouth of the tunnel. The platform allows guests a breathtaking view of the tunnel and surrounding natural rock amphitheater. **Access through the tunnel is prohibited because of railroad safety regulations.**

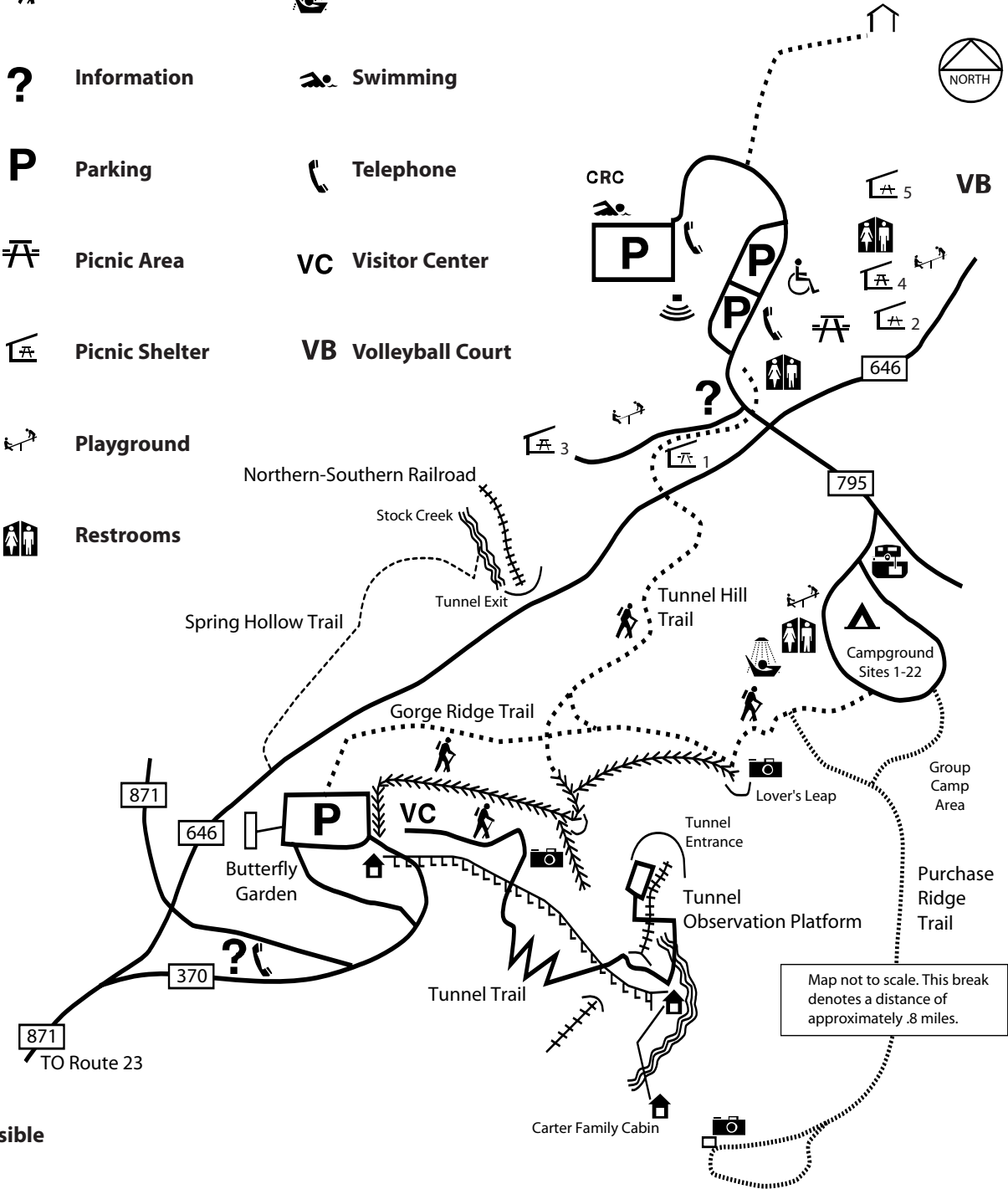
In addition to this spectacular rock formation, the park offers hiking, camping, picnicking and a swimming complex. Check park bulletin boards for upcoming interpretive programs and productions at the Natural Tunnel amphitheater. To make your visit safer and more pleasant, please observe these regulations:

- The public use or display of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- Help preserve your park. Please don’t cut or mar any plants or trees. Scientific collection of animal or plant life is allowed only by permit.
- Pets are permitted, but must be kept in an enclosed area or on a leash at all times.
- Hiking trails are for pedestrians and bicycles only. No motorized vehicles are allowed on park trails.
- Bicycles are permitted on most park trails. Bicyclists should use caution and yield to hikers.
- The possession or use of firearms is prohibited.
- The park is open for day use from dawn to dusk daily.
- Rock climbing and repelling are prohibited.

Mileage for the trails at Natural Tunnel State Park.		
MILES	TRAIL	COLOR
.7	Tunnel Hill Trail	Orange
.3	Tunnel Trail	Green
.4	Lover’s Leap Trail	Blue
.5	Gorge Ridge Trail	Yellow
1.1	Purchase Ridge Trail	Brown
.2	Spring Hollow Trail	Gold

- Amphitheater
- Dumping Station
- Campground
- Gazebo
- CRC Cover Rdge Center
- Handicapped Accessible

- Hiking Trail
- Shower
- Information
- Swimming
- Parking
- Telephone
- Picnic Area
- VC Visitor Center
- Picnic Shelter
- VB Volleyball Court
- Playground
- Restrooms



Map not to scale. This break denotes a distance of approximately .8 miles.